



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
HEARTLAND REGION -- ILLINOIS FIELD OFFICE
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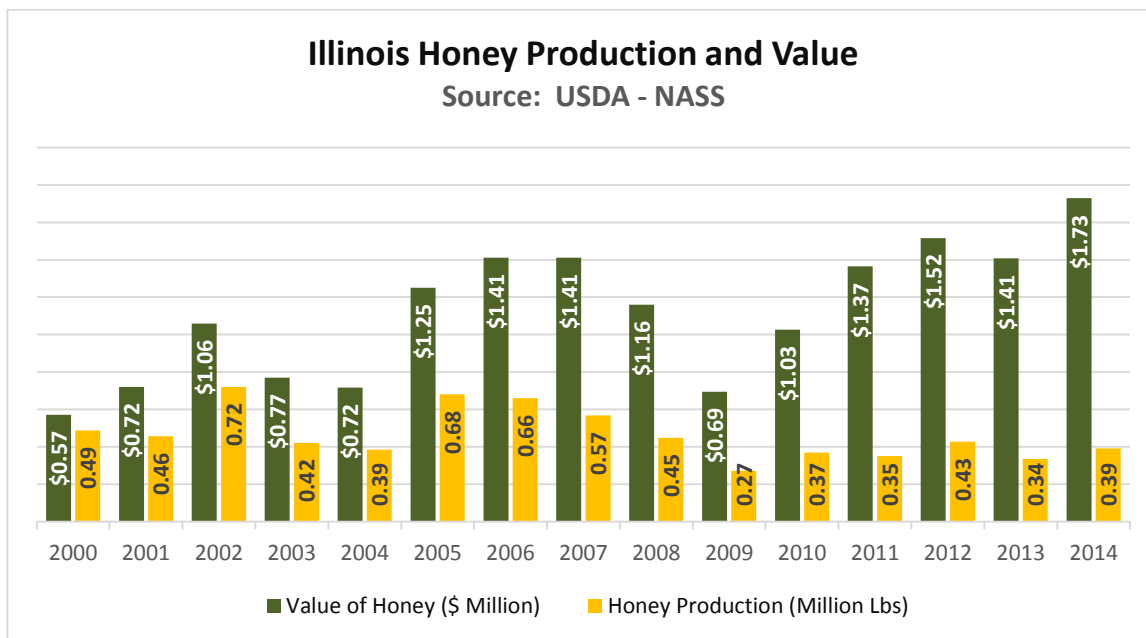
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USDA SURVEYING BEE AND HONEY OPERATIONS

Springfield, IL – Starting in mid-December, the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will measure bee colony inventories, cost of pollination, honey production, and also colony loss data during a nationwide survey.

“Interest in honey production, along with concern about the health of the bee population, continues to grow all around the country,” said Illinois State Statistician Mark Schleusener. “The USDA’s Bee and Honey Surveys give producers the opportunity to report the latest information on conditions of their bees and the impact on honey production.”

“Typically, we focus our efforts on larger honey producers but this year we are adding hundreds of smaller producers to our sample. It’s important to know about production from that group of producers as well as from larger, commercial producers,” said Schleusener.



Beginning in the middle of December, Illinois operators will be asked to provide information about their bee colonies, stocks of honey on hand, and production and prices received for honey in 2015. In Illinois, NASS will contact more than 1,200 operations to request their responses to the survey.

“Honey production in Illinois is down significantly from fifteen years ago. Data collected on these surveys will help the industry and USDA better understand colony health and honey production in the state,” Schleusener said. “The information can also help create public appreciation for the many benefits of U.S. bees and their products,” he added.

To make it as easy as possible for producers to participate in the survey, NASS offers the option of responding via the Internet, telephone, mail, or a personal interview with a local NASS representative.

Schleusener noted that, as is the case with all NASS surveys, information provided by respondents is confidential by law. "NASS safeguards the privacy of all responses and publishes only state- and national-level data, ensuring that no individual producer or operation can be identified," he said.

NASS will publish the survey results March 22, 2016, in the *Honey* report. This and all NASS reports are available online at www.nass.usda.gov. For more information, call the NASS Heartland Regional Field Office at (800) 551-1014.

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